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Preventive Diplomacy Emphasised In High-Level UNPO Conference

"The only way to get the international community to react is to literally hit them over the head with a hammer," said Senator John Nimrod, representative of the Assyrian people. This complaint, delivered at the Round Table Discussion on May 1, was typical of the frustration felt by UNPO members as they described their peoples' experiences of the little or no attention governments and international organizations pay to efforts by non-state entities to prevent violent conflict.

UNPO's conference "Conflict Prevention: The Post Cold War Challenge", was the first part of a two-part conference program aimed at improving international governmental and non-governmental efforts at conflict prevention. To this end, the UNPO brought together senior officials from the UNHCR, the CSCE, other international organizations, the Dutch Government, and representatives of peoples most affected by the conflicts.

As participants discussed the activities of international organizations such as the UN and the CSCE in the field of conflict prevention, one element emerged with prominence; the perception that international organizations blatantly apply double standards in dealing with non-state entities. As one partici-

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Participants at the UNPO Conflict Prevention Conference in the Hague

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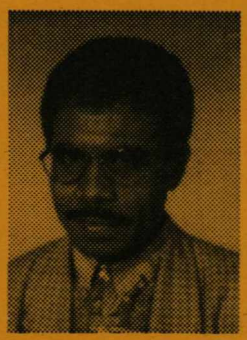
Indonesia recognizes Timorese Resistance



By JOSE ANTONIO AMORIM DIAS
East Timor

After almost 20 years of struggle against the Indonesian dictatorial regime, for the first time, Indonesia was forced to recognize the resistance in East Timor. This breakthrough occurred during the 4th round of talks in Geneva, on May 6, 1994 between the Foreign Minister of Portugal, Durao Barroso and Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Ali Alatas under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary General, Dr Butros Butros Ghali. Following this official recognition, the UN Secretary General urged Indonesia and Portugal to open "dialogue" with all parties involved in the conflict.

This time discussions continued to focus on the development of the so-called "confidence building measures" agreed upon by Indonesia and Portugal during the last round of talks in New York, September 1993. Welcoming the positive atmosphere in which the latest talks were held and the restraint displayed by both sides in international fora, Dr Butros Butros Ghali took the initiative and also came up with concrete measures. Some of the measures are as follows:

1. The UN Secretary General will explore appropriate steps to be undertaken towards facilitating an "all-inclusive intra-Timorese dialogue".
2. The Foreign Ministers of Portugal and Indonesia informed the Secretary General of their readiness to meet with the East Timorese from both sides.
3. The Ministers requested the Secretary General to identify a series of issues for consideration in advance of the next round of talks, including possible avenues of achieving a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution.

Both Foreign Ministers were content with the results and promised to resume their talks in January 1995 in Geneva. Prior to the 1995 meeting, talks between the representatives of the two governments will be held at the UN headquarters in New York.

UN's 'impotence' before Jakarta's 'inflexibility'

Before the talks, Dr Butros Butros Ghali received a letter from Mr Konis Santana, the current leader of the armed resistance in East Timor. In the letter he regretted the "UN inactivity and impotence" in the face of Jakarta's inflexibility. Furthermore, he stressed that the "UN had sacrificed its principles for billions of dollars which Indonesian lobby has intelligently imposed". Before ending, he reiterated his hope that under the "lucid mediation" of the UN Secretary General, practical measures must be found to end the drama of East Timor. Among other practical measures, Konis Santana stressed the need for the "correct interpretation" of the National Council of East Timor Resistance's (CNRM) Peace Plan. For immediate action he urged the unconditional release of Xanana Gusmao, the East Timorese resistance leader, and all other political prisoners and advocated the vital role of the Timorese national leader in the ongoing talks.

International public opinion stands behind the UN Secretary General's plan to ensure that the ongoing talks are under the

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an overview of documents and statements produced by UNPO

COMMUNIQUÉ

The Hague, 16 and 17 April 1994

The Steering Committee of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) met in its regular session, in The Hague, on 16 and 17 April, 1994.
In attendance were the following Members of the Steering Committee: Aboriginals of Australia, Ms Helen Corbett; Crimea (Tatars), Mr Mehmet Tütüncü; East Turkestan, Mr Kamil Abbas Kosova, Mr Qenan Sheji; Mapuche, Mr Reynaldo Mariqueo; Taiwan, Dr Parris Chang, West Papua, Mr Victor Kaisiepo
Absent were : Chittagong Hill Tracts, Cordillera and Tibet.
Also present were:-
General Secretary - Dr Michael van Walt van Praag
Vice Chairperson of the General Assembly - Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa
Vice Chairperson of the General Assembly - Senator John Nimrod
Deputy General Secretary - Ms Tsering Jampa
Assistant General Secretary for Eastern Europe - Dr Linnart Maell
Assistant General Secretary for United Nations Affairs and the Americas - Mr Meneaos Tzelios
Assistant General Secretary for Asia-Pacific - Ms Helen Corbett
Assistant General Secretary for the Environment - Mr Victor Kasiepo

The following decisions were adopted unanimously by the Steering Committee:

To admit as Members of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation:-
* The Circassian People represented by the International Circassian Association (Duneypso Adygei Khasa)
* The Republic of Gagauzia
The Steering Committee rejected applications for membership from:
* The Rehoboth Basters Community represented by the Council and Assembly of the Rehoboth Baster community.
* The South Brasilian Union represented by the Uniao dos Movimentos Libertarios do Sul.
* The Mon National University as representative organisation for the Mon people.
* The Australian South Sea Islanders, until a study has been made on the definition of Article 6a of the UNPO Covenant.

There were many applications which were postponed pending further research.

The Steering Committee will meet again in July in Geneva, Switzerland. The fourth General Assembly will be held during the first half of November.

The Steering Committee unanimously adopted a resolution on Taiwan. The resolution stated that it be resolved that it is the sense of the Steering Committee of the UNPO that the 21 million people in Taiwan should be fully represented in the United Nations and other international organisations.

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Indonesia recognizes Timorese Resistance

UN auspices. This is to avoid manipulations by the Indonesian secret intelligence in holding their own "reconciliation talks" amongst East Timorese which was unmasked and rejected by the United Nations. At the same time, as a warning to Indonesia, all discussions should be held within the "UN framework" rather than the "Indonesian framework" to avoid distortion of the conflict. "The question of East Timor is a question between Indonesia and the International Community. It is not a question between the East Timorese", says Xanana Gusmao. (Mr Jose Alexandre "Xanana" Gusmao was captured by the Indonesian Army on November 20, 1992 in East Timor and later sentenced to life imprisonment in a blatantly unfair trial.)

Is Indonesia willing to talk to Xanana Gusmao?
Considering the UN Secretary General efforts, the readiness of Portugal and Indonesia to enter into dialogue and the Timorese Resistance political structure, one may conclude that Jakarta has no reason to prolong the unfinished business in East Timor. It has to ultimately negotiate with the people of East Timor especially with the leading figures such as Mr Ramos Horta, Bishop Belo, Mr Konis Santana, the political party representatives and Xanana Gusmao. The international community has insistently appealed to Indonesia to release Xanana Gusmao, the leader of the East Timorese people, recognized as such by the European Union and the International Community. He is the central personality in any East Timor peace process. His unconditional release as well as that of all Timorese political prisoners, would show the good faith and will of Indonesia to solve the problem of East Timor. Surprisingly, in an interview with Radio Netherlands after the talks, Mr Ali Alatas refused to give assurances on the dialogue with Xanana because, according to him, "he is a criminal prisoner"; This conviction will be an obstacle for the future talks where Xanana plays the key role.

East Timor was a former Portuguese colony which Indonesia invaded in 1975 and annexed in the next year. As a consequence of the occupation, more than 200,000 East Timorese were murdered. Although the UN and the international community has persistently appealed for an Indonesian withdrawal from East Timor, Indonesia still continues to reinforce its military presence. To this day, there are approximately 30,000 troops in the territory. ■

CORRECTION

A special briefing on the situation in ACHEH in North Sumatra by the president of the Acheh / Sumatra National Liberation Front, Mr Tengku Hasan di Tiro, described large scale human rights abuses by the Indonesian army against the Achehnese population. The briefing, organised by the International Federation for the Protection of Minorities in conjunction with the UNPO was presented at the United Nations in Geneva last February 25. UNPO omitted this information in the last issue of UNPO News and would like to apologize to the Acheh / Sumatra National Liberation Front and the Acheh people in general for this error.